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FOCUS

The monthly magazine of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

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Partnerships to Solve Urban Problems

Urban Policy Institutes Link the Joint Center With Local Leaders to Address the Crises in Cities Through Coalition Building

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

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L.A. –A Wake-Up Call for Urban Policy

The violence done to Rodney King on the street by police and in the courtroom by jurors did more than trigger a disastrous and unfortunate riot. It completely altered the content and character of the 1992 presidential campaign policy debate.

On the Friday after the riot, the publisher of *The Progressive* magazine was asked on the "MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour" how he characterized what had happened in L.A. He said, "I characterize it as the Willie Horton Memorial Riot." That brief sentence sums up the neglect, racism, and just plain meanness that has emanated from our policymakers over the past decade and a half, and most notably from the Reagan and Bush administrations.

The riots painfully revealed that the larger American society had flunked the lesson of the Watts riot more than a quarter century earlier. The problems are the same now as they were then, and so are the solutions: reduce racial alienation, reduce poverty, reduce unemployment, and reduce hopelessness.

The interrelationship among these issues can be most clearly seen in the Joint Center's recent research on youth: "A large portion of young black males are no longer fulfilling the normal roles of adulthood: worker and family head. In 1973, 55.4 percent of black males aged 20 to 29 were employed full-time, year-round; by 1986, only 44.8 percent were employed full-time." Not surprisingly, both employment rates and earnings are directly related to educational attainment and achievement.

The reduced educational opportunities available to young black males and the decline in their ability to earn "family-level" wages is reflected in an alarming increase in criminal activity. The number of black arrests increased by almost 36 percent between 1980 and 1990, more than twice the rate of whites. Further, blacks comprise almost half of all inmates in U.S. prisons.

The urban policy debate that is emerging in the wake of the riots challenges both the public and the private sectors to act. That is good. But this time we must go beyond a public-private partnership; we must add new ingredients by involving black Americans and other inner-city dwellers, as well as our youth, in the search for solutions.

The Joint Center anticipated this challenge last year when we conceived an Urban Policy Institutes program. (See article on page 7.) The goal of this program is to help local organizations and leaders participate more effectively in shaping local public policies.

The program is a partnership between local leaders and the Joint Center to enhance the effectiveness of black participation in the local public policy debate. The Joint Center plans to develop such collaborations in 10 cities during the next several years, with a goal of networking the nation's major cities into a national urban policy grid. The first Urban Policy Institute was launched in Chicago on April 30, the day after the L.A. riots broke out.

With the Joint Center serving as the national resource, each local UPI will utilize networking, research, materials development, periodic consultation, and conferencing to secure an attentive hearing in the local policy debate, in the media, and in other forums which seek to mobilize public opinion and to effect change.

The end of hostilities between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union is as good a time as any to begin coalition-building in the U.S. across racial and ethnic lines. The Los Angeles riots were a wake-up call, summoning us to intensify the fight against injustice and to renew efforts to save our cities. ■

Eddie N. Williams
PRESIDENT

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The Rise of Democratic Reform in Africa

As One-Party Regimes Fall Under Citizen Pressure, Newly Formed Democratic Governments Face Economic Challenges, Ethnic Divisions

by Deborah Kobak

Weeks before the October 1991 presidential election in Zambia, trade unionist Frederick Chiluba was running ahead of Kenneth Kaunda, the country's president for 27 years. All quarters of the society feared that the election would be marred by violence and the vote tainted by fraud. But in a stunning commitment to multi-party politics by the Zambian people, volunteers from all over the country organized a massive campaign of voter education and election monitoring that ensured an impartial outcome.

"What impressed me was how many illiterate and uneducated people out in the rural areas of the country understood both the issues surrounding the campaign and where their perceived interests lay," says Walter Carrington, a member of the international team of observers led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and himself a former U.S. ambassador to Senegal. "In addition, the election volunteers represented a tremendous civil awareness and desire to see that the election went off in a peaceful and fair manner," Carrington says.

Zambia, however, is only one of a handful of African states with a democratic government. Throughout Africa, independence from colonial control generally led to centralized rule, justified by African leaders as a means to promote economic development and bring cohesiveness to their ethnically divided countries. But the economic consequences proved otherwise. Even in countries where private enterprise was not nationalized outright, a maze of bureaucratic systems discouraged investment. Legislative bodies and appointed governmental and judicial posts were packed with officials sympathetic to ruling regimes. The one-party governments presided over economic and social decline marked in many cases by the diversion of resources into the pockets of high government officials. Now, an unprecedented number of the continent's 53 countries are ending single-party or military rule.

Not all African states adopted autocratic regimes during the post-colonial period. Some, like Botswana, The Gambia, and Mauritius, nurtured democratic political traditions and developed successful multi-party political systems. Zimbabwe has also sustained a pluralistic democracy since it became an independent nation in 1980. Still other nations—Nigeria, Ghana, and Somalia for example—have had intermittent experiences with democratic governance since independence.

The democratic reforms that are sweeping across Africa today are as broad and varied as the continent itself. In many nations, the movement toward reform was initiated by independent civic organizations such as professional and business associations, trade unions, women's groups, academic research institutions, and youth advocacy organizations. The formation of these independent pressure groups was coupled with the growing realization that state-controlled economies had failed in most countries. Economic decay and the inadequacy of basic social services—such as health care and education—triggered much of the new activism.

According to Carol Lancaster, an assistant professor at Georgetown University, political reform has taken three dominant forms. Some leaders have voluntarily called for multi-party elections after instituting deliberate steps towards liberalization over a period of several years. In other nations, pressure groups have forced their governments to accept reforms through civil protests, strikes, and demonstrations. A third pattern of change is typified by African states that are only likely to realize democratic reform through violent mass uprisings.

Reforms Initiated by Government

Senegal was one of the first African states whose government took the lead in establishing a "guided" democracy. According to Walter Carrington, four political parties representing the major political philosophies—conservatism, liberalism, socialism, and Marxism-Leninism—were allowed to organize in 1974 by President Leopold Senghor, Senegal's first post-colonial leader. Senghor felt that a more open political system would ultimately ensure social stability and help attract economic support from abroad. Senghor then notched another African first by voluntarily stepping down as president in 1981.

Under Senghor's successor, President Abdou Diouf, new political parties have been allowed to form, and governmental and non-governmental institutions, such as the judiciary and trade unions, operate free of state intervention. Senegal has also maintained "a vigorous and long-standing free press tradition—you can go to a newspaper kiosk every month and find 20 magazines representing 20 viewpoints," says Carrington.

(Continued on page 4)

Ms. Kobak is a program assistant at the Joint Center, who manages grants from the National Endowment for Democracy to African institutions.

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Reforms Demanded by the People

Calls for democratic reform took an even more dramatic form in Zambia. The transition to multi-party politics there is unique in bringing the unbroken post-colonial leadership of its president, Kenneth Kaunda, to a peaceful end. By electing Frederick Chiluba and his party, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy, Zambians removed Kaunda, their first and only president since independence. Kaunda's eventual departure from office seemed probable when riots over food prices led to a failed coup attempt in 1990. The riots induced Kaunda to lift his ban on political parties other than his own United National Independence Party.

Although the election was deemed free and fair both by Carter's observation team and by Zambians themselves, it was Kaunda's acceptance of defeat that facilitated a peaceful and swift transfer of power. In a continent where rulers often stifle opposition and stay in office until death or a military coup, by stepping aside Kaunda set an important example. Before Chiluba was sworn in, Kaunda appeared on national television and said, "The true lesson of democracy is to accept the verdict of the people."

Ghana is another country currently experiencing popular support for democratic reform that was initiated by citizen groups. The current head of state, air force flight lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, came to power in a 1983 coup that deposed Hilla Limann, Ghana's last democratically elected leader. While Rawlings and the military regime he leads, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), have been praised for implementing World Bank and International Monetary Fund economic restructuring programs, Rawlings has also been sharply criticized for denying Ghanaians full freedom of expression.

Despite an unfortunate "brain drain of intellectuals," Ghana's civic organizations have continued to press for a return to pluralistic politics and freedom of expression. Growth of a reform movement was first manifested in a surge of independent newspapers that openly criticized Rawlings and the PNDC. Responding to public pressure, in January 1992 the PNDC permitted an independent Ghanaian research organization, the Institute of Economic Affairs, to convene a major conference on political, economic, and social reform. The conference was cosponsored by the Joint Center through a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy.

Dr. Charles Mensa, a Ghanaian economist and executive director of the Institute, conducted a forum of political opposition groups, government officials, civic associations, and academics to discuss Ghana's political situation for the first time in a decade. "The impact [of the forum] on this country is enormous," Mensa says. "It has broken the 'culture of silence' and shown our fellow Ghanaians that they are not alone in their quest for democracy."

Although some critics have expressed doubts about Rawlings' commitment to true reform, he appears to be bending to internal pressures. A constitutional referendum took place earlier this spring, followed by the legalization of political parties in May. A presidential election is planned for December and Rawlings is a candidate.

Kenya is another country whose government has responded slowly to reform initiatives. While Kenya developed democratic institutions and a free enterprise economic system in the 1960s, over the years many of these structures reverted to state control.

Maina Kiai, the executive director of the Kenya Human Rights Commission based in Washington, suggests that growing dissatisfaction with the government among Kenya's relatively large professional and business class has significantly strengthened the movement towards reform.

But events outside the country have also fueled the movement. The significance of the Zambian election was not lost on Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi or the Kenyan people. Moi is considering a measured return to pluralistic politics: he legalized political parties in February and tentatively called for a general multi-party election in September 1992. However, Kiai points to recent clashes between members of Moi's Kalenjin tribe and other ethnic groups in western Kenya as evidence of "government-orchestrated violence" designed to prevent Kenya from instituting a multi-party political system.

Reforms in the Aftermath of Civil War

Some democratic transitions have evolved from armed conflict, as in the case of Mali. In March 1991, Mali's armed forces halted violence between political demonstrators and the military by ending President Moussa Traore's 22-year rule. The leaders of the coup then called for a national conference to plot a course toward democracy.

In the former Portuguese colony of Angola, the situation was complicated by external intervention in the country's civil war. After a protracted guerrilla war ended Portugal's colonial rule of Angola in 1975, the U.S. and the Soviet Union waged a proxy war through the two internal forces vying for control of the country: the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), backed by the Soviets, and the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), backed by the U.S. and South Africa.

Peace has now been declared in Angola, but factional conflict threatens democratization. Thirty-seven political parties are fielding candidates in the September 1992 elections to establish a representative government in the war-ravaged country. But so far only a few parties, the MPLA and UNITA included, have met the formal qualifications required to participate in the election.

Democratization is still a remote concept for some African countries like Liberia, which is piecing itself together in the aftermath of a bloody civil war. Although a cease-fire agreement has been signed and an interim government named, rebel forces are still armed and in control of the rural areas outside Monrovia, the capital.

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June 1992

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Inside This Issue:

- Bill Clinton has garnered enough convention delegates to clinch the Democratic presidential nomination.
- The Democrats strive for unity on national issues as they prepare for their convention in July.
- Congressional races heat up in two majority-black districts in Georgia.
- An African research institute has been established on Goree Island, once an embarkation point for slaves being brought to the Americas.
- Across the Nation: Two black state senators are in a runoff for a congressional seat in Alabama; Walter Tucker wins a congressional primary and two women will face each other for an L.A. supervisor's post in California; and Eva Clayton and Melvin Watt are victorious in congressional races in North Carolina.

Clinton Gears Up for Leadership Role

Democratic presidential candidate **BILL CLINTON** won 65 percent of the delegates on the final primary day of June 2, securing him the Democratic nomination. Big wins in New York State, Pennsylvania, and throughout the South had already advanced Clinton to front-runner status. With 2,145 delegates needed to secure the nomination, Clinton has succeeded in amassing over 2500 delegates, including 442 superdelegates (elected or other party officials). There are 772 superdelegate slots.

Clinton has received key endorsements from, among others, House Speaker **TOM FOLEY**, House Majority Leader **RICHARD GEPHARDT**, and black political leaders like Congresswoman **MAXINE WATERS**, who represents the area of Los Angeles hardest hit by the recent riots. Other members of the Congressional Black Caucus have also thrown their support behind Clinton. In addition, Clinton has gained important backing from former president **JIMMY CARTER** and from former vice president and 1984 presidential candidate **WALTER MONDALE**.

Even with this support, some analysts believe that to gain the momentum he needs to carry him through the fall, Clinton must choose a vice president from outside the traditional party system—someone who, as **TOM MANN**, director of governmental studies at the Brookings Institution, puts it, is a "can-do, non-political" person. "The irony is that we have a candidate who is wrapping up the nomination early [in the process], there is relative peace in the party, and yet he has been severely damaged during the primary process with questions of his character and has been overtaken [in the polls] by independent candidate **H. ROSS PEROT**," says Mann. With this in mind, Clinton has created a panel to develop a pool of potential vice presidential candidates. The panel members are **WARREN M. CHRISTOPHER**, a California lawyer and former deputy secretary of state in the Carter administration; **MADELEINE KUNIN**, former governor of Vermont; and Washington, D.C. attorney **VERNON JORDAN**, former president of the National Urban League and a member of the Joint Center board of governors. Although there is no "short list," several names are repeatedly mentioned, including U.S. senators **BILL BRADLEY** of New Jersey, **JAY ROCKEFELLER** of West Virginia, and **BOB KERREY** of Nebraska, Clinton's former rival in the primaries.

Pre-convention Democrats—Keeping the Lid On

With less than a month to go before the Democratic convention meets in New York from July 13 to 16, party

officials are trying to pull together a coalition strong enough to weather the turbulence of the third-party candidacy of Perot and to beat **GEORGE BUSH** in the fall. Although platform issues and decisions on special rules and credentials have still not been finalized, the Democrats are hoping to smooth over any outcroppings of dissension before the first gavel sounds at Madison Square Garden. The party's platform committee met in Cleveland on May 18 to discuss four topics it has adopted as critical themes: economic opportunity and hope, responsibility, community empowerment, and redefining national security. Over 90 representatives from various organizations made presentations before the committee to persuade it to include their concerns in the platform. Speaking on behalf of the National Rainbow Coalition, Rev. **JESSE JACKSON** charged the Bush Administration with a lack of sympathy towards people of color and low-income citizens. Jackson cited the economic and social jeopardy that led to the recent riots in Los Angeles. "This platform must not be a place for platitudes and positioning," he said, "but a place to reach for a higher plateau, and to provide a vision that addresses the crisis."

The moderate-to-conservative Democratic Leadership Council, which Clinton chaired from March 1990 to August 1991, asked the platform committee to consider adopting a "public benefits for public service" program, whereby welfare recipients would participate in educational and vocational training in exchange for receiving public assistance benefits. The council also called for the creation of a "civilian GI bill," by which a person who gives a year or two of voluntary national service (such as teaching, assisting in shelters or hospitals, or repairing housing) would receive federal aid toward college or job training benefits in lieu of a Pell student aid grant. No specific dollar amounts for these proposed benefits have been announced. Participants would complete their service either before or after college, depending on the service organization's requirements.

While the issue of abortion remains at the center of hot national debate, it is not likely to be a major point of contention among Democrats. Pennsylvania's Democratic governor **ROBERT P. CASEY** is one of the few who has assailed the party for adopting a pro-choice stance. Pennsylvania's strict antiabortion law, currently before the Supreme Court, requires, among other things, spousal notification and that women wait 24 hours before obtaining an abortion. "I believe [the Democratic Party's position on abortion] is wrong in principle and out of the mainstream of our party's historic commitment to protecting the powerless," Casey told the platform committee in Cleveland. Despite Casey's position, the party's history of supporting a woman's right to choose is in no danger of being reversed. As **KATE MICHELMAN**, president of the National Abortion Rights Action League, told the platform committee, "A solid pro-choice plank is not merely good politics—it's strong principle."

The volumes of testimony given at the Cleveland meeting will be sifted on June 12 and 13 when the platform committee meets again to whittle the material down to a workable document. Decisions on which issues will comprise the platform will be made at the final committee meeting on June 27. According to Tom Mann of Brookings, the Democrats are eager to prevent the kinds of internal conflicts that characterized their 1988 convention. That year Jesse Jackson demanded greater participation among minorities in the party leadership which led to **RON BROWN**'s taking the reigns of the Democratic National Committee. Jackson also demanded same-day voter registration and statehood for the District of Columbia. While some party insiders feel those demands gave voters the perception of the party that year as fractured, others believe that much of Jackson's agenda remains on the table as the party's unfinished business.

Congressional Horse Race in Georgia

In Georgia's July 21 congressional primary, a welter of candidates will compete to represent the two new majority-black districts in the state: the 2nd, encompassing the Macon, Albany, and Columbus area; and the 11th, including Augusta, Savannah, and the south Atlanta suburb of Dekalb County. Georgia already has a majority-black district, the 5th, in Atlanta, represented by **JOHN LEWIS**. The 2nd district has a black voting-age population of just over 52 percent. Approximately 44 percent of the blacks there are registered to vote. Among the candidates in the race for this newly created seat is white, six-term congressman **CHARLES HATCHER**, who currently represents the "old" 2nd district, and has the dubious distinction of being number three on the House check-bouncing list (he bounced more than 700 checks). Hatcher chairs the House agricultural subcommittee on peanuts and tobacco, and the district's farmers have vowed to return him to Washington because of his efforts to protect peanut price supports in the 1990 Farm Bill. He also has a strong base of support in Albany's black community owing to a respectable voting record on issues of special concern to blacks. He supported the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Martin Luther King National Holiday bill, and legislation to increase the minimum wage.

The line-up of Democratic challengers to Hatcher includes four black candidates: state senator **SANFORD BISHOP** of Columbus, Macon attorney and minister **LOONZY EDWARDS**, engineer **STEPHANIE A. KAGLER** from the town of Warner Robins, and **MARY YOUNG-CUMMINGS**, an attorney and state representative from Albany. Republican hopefuls are black insurance agent **DON MENEFEE** of Columbus and **JOSEPH WILLIAMS**, a white candidate from Valdosta who works in a family-owned convenience store. Sen. Bishop and Rep. Young-Cummings are considered to be Hatcher's strongest challengers. A 45-year-old attorney, Bishop is a 16-year veteran of the state general assembly (14 years in the House and two in the senate). He has been a member of the senate appropriations, judiciary, reapportionment and education committees. Bishop has the greatest fundraising potential among Hatcher's challengers because of his broad name recognition developed over his long tenure in the state legislature and his strong relationship with Columbus bankers and businessmen. The ability to raise more money than his competitors should give him an advantage in buying campaign ads in the district's three media markets. Young-Cummings has been in the state house for 10 years and was an Albany city commissioner for eight years. Active in national Democratic politics for two decades, she was a state coordinator for the 1984 Jesse Jackson presidential campaign. Local observers don't rule out the possibility of Hatcher's walking away with the seat because of the crowded field of candidates and the possibility of low voter turnout.

The Democratic primary in the 11th district (60 percent black voting-age population) is a real "horse race" among three black candidates: Dekalb state senator **EUGENE WALKER** and state representatives **CYNTHIA McKINNEY** of Atlanta and **MICHAEL THURMOND** of Athens, according to **BOB HOLMES**, director of the Southern Center for Studies in Public Policy in Atlanta. Walker, a four-term state senator who has served as a majority whip, seems to be running ahead of the other two. He is the second vice chair of the state party and has been endorsed by governor **ZELL MILLER**. McKinney teaches political science and international relations at Agnes Scott College in Dekalb and is serving her second term in the state general assembly where she is a member of the reapportionment committee. She is promoting herself as a "two-for-one" candidate, citing her race and gender as assets for the district's representation. She is outspoken and not shy about taking controversial stands. For example, she opposed the Gulf War while her father and fellow house member, **JAMES McKINNEY**, supported the use of force in that conflict. She has attracted the support of local women's groups and several of Atlanta's heavyweights, including former mayor, congressman, and U.N. ambassador **ANDREW YOUNG** and influential black businessman **HERMAN RUSSELL**, CEO of the construction firm of H.J. Russell and Company.

Thurmond is a three-term member of the house who chairs the state's legislative black caucus and has served on the judiciary, ways and means, and education committees. Thurmond does not reside in the 11th but so far his residence has not been a factor in the campaign. Also vying for the Democratic nomination are two black candidates who are not expected to capture many votes: Jefferson County school administrator **VERDREE LOCKHART** and **MOSES TODD** of Savannah. Black Republican candidates are **MICHAEL PRATT**, a Savannah attorney, and **OTIS SMITH**, a Presbyterian minister from Augusta. But in this heavily Democratic district, their chances of prevailing in November are slim.

Goree Island: From Slave Fortress to Think Tank

Historic Goree Island, just off the coast of Dakar, Senegal, once served as a point of embarkation for slaves shipped to North and South America. Now it is the site of another landmark: the headquarters of the Goree Institute, a nonprofit initiative to promote pan-African research and dialogue. The idea behind the Goree Institute was born in 1987 when Senegal hosted the first official meeting between representatives of South Africa's white Afrikaaner business community and the African National Congress (ANC), which triggered the negotiations still underway in South Africa to establish a multi-racial democracy. Seeing the need for open communication among all Africans, Senegalese President **ABDOU DIOUF** called on the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), one of the conveners of the Afrikaaner-ANC meeting, to organize a pan-African center for democracy.

At IDASA's request, the Joint Center agreed in 1991 to administer a seed grant from the National Endowment for Democracy to launch the Goree Institute. The Institute, which officially opens its doors this June, hopes to promote democracy, economic development, and cultural awareness across Africa through a program of research, conferences, and cultural events. Activities planned for the rest of 1992 include an economic conference, an African fine arts festival, and a working tour to Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa to enable prominent Africans representing political rights organizations to study democratic reform initiatives in those countries.

Across the Nation

ALABAMA: The Democratic nomination for Alabama's newly minted majority-black 7th congressional district will be decided in a June 30 runoff between two black state senators, **EARL HILLIARD** of Birmingham and **HANK SANDERS** of Selma. The two topped a field of five candidates in the June 2 primary, receiving 30 percent and 25 percent of the vote respectively. The 7th district encompasses parts of Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma and has a black voting-age population of 64 percent. The other candidates in the June 2 primary were also black and included Montgomery county commissioner **JOHN KNIGHT**, Selma state representative **JAMES LOUIS THOMAS**, and **SAM TAYLOR** of Dayton, a legislative assistant to the district's current congressman, white Democrat **CLAUDE HARRIS**, who is not running for reelection.

Hilliard has served six years in the state house and is serving his fourth term as senator. Sanders, vice chair of the finance committee, was elected to the senate in 1983. The GOP nomination will also be decided in the June 30 runoff between two black candidates: **JONATHAN McPHERSON, SR.**, a businessman from Birmingham, and **KERVIN JONES**, a farmer from Tuscaloosa. McPherson owns several funeral homes in the state and is a retired college chemistry professor.

In the Alabama race for the U.S. senate, black Jefferson County commissioner and former Birmingham state representative **CHRIS McNAIR** failed to unseat the state's junior senator, **RICHARD SHELBY**, in the June primary. McNair campaigned against Shelby's conservative voting record and, appealing to women voters, attacked Shelby's decision to support the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice **CLARENCE THOMAS**. But when the ballots were tallied, McNair garnered only 28 percent of the vote.

CALIFORNIA: **LYNN DYMALLY** will not succeed her father, retiring congressman **MERVYN DYMALLY**, in the U. S. House of Representatives. She and three other candidates were defeated in the June 2 Democratic congressional primary by Compton mayor **WALTER R. TUCKER, JR.** They were vying for their party's nomination to the newly drawn 37th district seat being vacated by the elder Dymally. Tucker outpolled Dymally 39 percent to 37 percent. (See May 1992 Across the Nation)

In Los Angeles County, state senator **DIANE WATSON** and former congresswoman **YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE** were the top two vote-getters in a 12-candidate race for the 2nd district seat of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, winning 45 and 41 percent of the vote, respectively. The two will face each other in a November runoff.

The five-member board of supervisors was all white until two years ago, when the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the American Civil Liberties Union won a law suit (*Garza* v. *County of Los Angeles*) that found the county supervisorial district boundaries to have been drawn in violation of the Voting Rights Act. Since Hispanics comprise 31 percent of the Los Angeles County population, MALDEF had charged that three of the five election districts were gerrymandered to prevent Hispanics from being elected to the board. The Los Angeles chapters of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the Urban League, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference were also parties to the suit (blacks make up 10 percent of the county's population). As a result of the suit, the district lines were redrawn in 1991 and Hispanic Los Angeles councilwoman **GLORIA MOLINA** was elected to the board's 1st supervisorial district seat that year.

GEORGIA: State commissioner of labor **AL SCOTT** is running for election to fill the remaining two years of the post he now occupies. A former Savannah state representative, Scott was appointed to the post by Governor Zell Miller in January 1991 to fill the vacancy left by **JOE TANNER** who was appointed to another position (See February 1991 Across the Nation). Scott's first electoral obstacle is getting past the Democratic primary on July 21. In that contest, he will face **DAVID POYTHRESS**, an Atlanta attorney and former secretary of state, and **FRANCES JOHNSON**, a union worker from Savannah; both are white. As labor commissioner, Scott heads a staff of 1,800 and oversees an annual budget of more than $150 million. The state employment offices administer the state's unemployment insurance program, the federal Job Training Partnership Act, and a variety of employment programs.

NORTH CAROLINA: Warren County commissioner **EVA CLAYTON** defeated white state representative **WALTER JONES III** in the June 2 runoff for the Democratic nomination to represent the newly created majority-black 1st congressional district which includes the city of Wilmington. Clayton received 55 percent of the vote to Jones' 45 percent.

In the 12th district, former Charlotte state senator **MELVIN WATT** clinched the Democratic nomination on May 5. Watt, a graduate of Yale Law School, had managed the election campaigns of black former Charlotte mayor (and U.S. senate candidate) **HARVEY GANTT**. The district includes parts of Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and Charlotte. In the Republican runoff for the district, black Greensboro attorney **BARBARA GORE WASHINGTON** defeated state assistant secretary of human resources **GEORGE JONES, SR.**, of Raleigh (See April 1992 Across the Nation).

Keeping Kids in School

"Cities in Schools," a Drop-Out Prevention Program, Brings the Resources of Health and Social Agencies Into Educational Institutions

by Walter J. Leonard

Every year, hundreds of thousands of young Americans drop out of school, most of them from poor, single-parent families. Sadly, they are condemning themselves to uncertain futures, since it is virtually impossible to advance in our society without at least a high school diploma. This is a monumental problem. The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation reports that 12 million of America's youth are at risk of dropping out. Not only do young people harm themselves by dropping out, but poorly educated, low-skilled adults are more likely to become economic drains on the society than assets.

One response to the problem is Cities in Schools (CIS). Formed nearly 30 years ago, it is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to dropout prevention. Taking a communitywide approach to intervention, there are 64 independent, local CIS programs in operation that provide personal, coordinated, and accountable social services to pubic school students at risk of abandoning their education. Most of these students, who range in age from 10 to 19 years old, have not benefitted from "early" intervention programs.

Public school is often the last opportunity for society to positively influence the life of a disadvantaged youth. Society's remaining interventions tend to be costly—public assistance, drug treatment, incarceration. At CIS, our emphasis is on prevention and long-term solutions. As Lisbeth B. Schorr writes in *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*. "If [adequate health, education, and social services] were more widely available, fewer children would come into adulthood unschooled and unskilled, committing violent crimes, and bearing children as unmarried teenagers. Fewer of today's vulnerable children would tomorrow swell the welfare rolls and the prisons. Many more would grow into responsible and productive adults, able to form stable families and contributing to, rather than depleting, America's prosperity and sense of community. Utility and self-interest, as well as humanity, should move us to apply what we have learned."

Troubled students, who may have nowhere else to turn, not even to their families, must seek out the help they so badly need—health care, job counseling, tutoring—from a confusing variety of scattered agencies. Not only are young people expected to locate these resources by themselves, they must also penetrate a faceless and intimidating bureaucracy in hopes of reaching the counselors or mentors who can see them as individuals and not as walking problems. Such a quest would be daunting to many well educated adults, but for young people, the task frequently proves overwhelming—to give up and drop out appears the preferable alternative.

Teaming Up on Problems

The concept behind the Cities In Schools approach is a simple one: making social services available at schools. Our premise is that the public schools alone cannot resolve the diverse problems that keep students from learning and maturing into productive adults. The rest of the community must be willing to contribute to youth development through a collective effort.

As the organization's name suggests, the city and its resources are placed in schools where service providers and teachers work as a team. The program has found that when a teacher, a health worker, and a career counselor work together with the same group of at-risk students each day, greater improvements in student behavior, academic performance, and attitudes are achieved than when services are delivered in isolation, uncoordinated, and outside the educational setting. The CIS program also augments the efforts of service agencies with student interns and large numbers of volunteer mentors and tutors.

Supported financially by a consortium of federal agencies, foundations, private corporations, as well as gifts from individuals, the CIS network of 64 local programs operates in 21 states, 122 communities, and 384 school sites. Each program must first and foremost be responsive to local needs. Therefore the specific resources "brokered in" by local programs vary from city to town to rural county depending on the needs of the students, their families, and the community. But among the services most frequently offered are: alcohol and drug education, violence deterrence, pregnancy prevention, minority male initiatives, employment training, career counseling, and workplace skills training. During the 1990-91 school year, more than 36,700 students and their families received personal, coordinated, and accountable services from CIS. There are also CIS programs overseas: the United Kingdom Cities In Schools program is now two years old.

Dr. Leonard, a former president of Fisk University, is executive director of Cities In Schools, Inc. based in Alexandria, Virginia.

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Schools

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Not Beyond Saving

The strength of CIS's efforts is best judged by the dramatic differences it can make in the lives of young people and their families. Take the case of Edward, a middle school student in the Charlotte, North Carolina, program. Edward's father had deserted him, his mother, and his younger brother, and when his case came to the school's attention, his family had no money for food. With no permanent mailing address, the family could not receive public assistance or food stamps and Edward's poor attendance at school was linked to his mother's inability to afford gas for her pick-up truck.

To respond to this family crisis, May Sheyda, a dropout prevention counselor managing the CIS project at Edward's school, succeeded in getting the Department of Social Services to accept a friend's residence as a temporary address for the family enabling them to reapply for public assistance. She then arranged to have Edward participate in the CIS program. The individual attention Edward received renewed his interest in learning and helped neutralize the pressures of his family's difficulties.

Edward's mother later found an apartment, but she had to spend all of her first AFDC welfare check on a deposit and the first month's rent. When the electric company threatened to cut off her power if she did not pay bill, Sheyda connected the family with the Salvation Army and several other charities which helped them through that financial emergency. CIS has also provided Edward's family with kitchen utensils, clothes, and money for gas through an emergency cash and supplies fund which most local programs maintain.

Meanwhile, Sheyda encouraged Edward's mother to enroll in a community college to work toward a high school diploma. Both Edward and his mother then had the same goal: securing an education. Soon Edward's mother found a part-time job driving a cab. Today the family is stable and optimistic about the future.

In another case, Gerald had been written off by many as beyond saving. A 9th-grade dropout, Gerald joined the Crips gang in Los Angeles, and was soon a full-time outlaw—dealing drugs, stealing cars, robbing, and terrorizing. As his life became more violent, Gerald began to see that he was on a collision course with prison or death. The turning point came when his best friend in the Crips said to him, minutes before a confrontation with a rival gang, "This life isn't working out. We really ought to go back to school." In the ensuing gun battle, the friend was killed but Gerald became determined to change.

When he heard about the Inglewood CIS program, Gerald applied and was re-enrolled in school. Through CIS, he was recruited for the Corporate Academy, a school sponsored by Burger King for young people who have dropped out but want to return to school. Social services such as drug counseling, workplace skills, and anti-gang programs helped Gerald redirect his life. He graduated from high school, and today he is a student at Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi.

The benefits of CIS do not all flow in one direction. Indeed, an entire community benefits when students are turned around. A central tenet of our approach is our belief that every young person wants to be useful and appreciated by others. This was demonstrated in the Caldwell County, North Carolina, program, where 99 CIS students were receiving over 1,700 cumulative hours of tutoring and mentoring services each month. Through CIS coordination, these 99 students are now giving back what they received by tutoring younger at-risk students in three of the county's elementary schools. In McAllen, Texas, CIS high school students conducted a food drive to provide Thanksgiving meals for needy families.

A Human Investment

One of the great strengths of Cities In Schools is its cost effectiveness. Relatively little new funding is required to start CIS in a new community. One study concluded that for every dollar that CIS programs spend, a minimum of five dollars are leveraged into the program—both by repositioning the services of other agencies and by co-ordinating in-kind donations of volunteers' time, office space, and computers. During the 1990-91 school year, 424 staff members from 233 service-providing agencies were repositioned to work in CIS programs nationwide. Large savings were realized because the salaries of the professionals working in CIS projects continue to be paid by their home agencies.

More importantly, the funding for CIS should be seen as a human investment with high yields in the long term. The program's benefits far outweigh the dollars expended to support them. In Atlanta, Georgia, a 1986 study showed that while the local CIS program cost $1.2 million per year to operate, it produced $7 to $9.5 million in long- and short-term benefits for each academic year of operation. These investments have made anticipated public expenditures unnecessary—including an estimated $540,000 in Atlanta school funding saved by improving attendance and reducing the number of dropouts; $48,000 per year in savings to the criminal justice system because of reduced arrests for youth crimes; and over $4 million in avoided long-term welfare costs.

This is a society of great wealth where many of our citizens enjoy high standards of living. Yet this is also a society that has permitted the deplorable disintegration of families, neighborhoods, and even entire cities. As the social and economic gaps between the haves and the have-nots widen, one wonders what kind of inheritance we will leave for the next generation. Will there be more jails than schools? Will there be a safety net to keep families together, or a system that drives them apart?

It is hoped that the public, private, and nonprofit sectors will make greater investments to support programs dedicated to effective prevention and intervention. Since the future of an entire generation is at stake, the price for failing to do so is too high. ■

Partnerships to Solve Urban Problems

Urban Policy Institutes Link the Joint Center With Local Leaders to Address the Crises in Cities Through Coalition Building

by Yvonne Scruggs

Over the years, the Joint Center has worked in many different ways to strengthen the capacity of black Americans, especially their organizations and leaders, to influence the nation's political system. In January of this year, the Joint Center initiated a new program, the Urban Policy Institutes (UPI), which is designed to enable African-American leaders to have an impact on local public policies that directly affect their communities.

The establishment of Urban Policy Institutes was prophetic given the recent events in Los Angeles which served, as mentioned in this month's "Perspective" by Eddie N. Williams, as a wake-up call for our society to the persistent, unresolved, and worsening problems in poor and minority communities.

The Urban Policy Institutes concept is based on the historic American notion that an effective civil society requires informed citizen participation in all aspects of governance and policy making. The Joint Center will contribute to this goal by drawing upon its experience in research, policy analysis, and coalition building to help local organizations and leaders document problems, identify options, and develop problem-solving strategies.

The Urban Policy Institutes blend this experience with local coalition-building efforts to address the debilitating problems of social isolation and declining economic opportunities that acutely affect our inner cities.

A Unique Partnership

The Institutes represent a unique partnership between local leaders and the Joint Center to enhance the effectiveness of black participation in the local political and public policy arenas. With the Joint Center serving as catalyst and resource, each UPI will be composed of at least 50 local leadership organizations and individuals who will participate in periodic day-long public policy review and strategy-development sessions. The first in the series of Urban Policy Institute sessions was held in Chicago in April with financial support from the Joyce Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust, and the Human Relations Foundation of Chicago.

In the Chicago UPI, local partners include representatives from the Chicago Urban League, PUSH, Chicago State University, the DuSable Museum, Harold Washington College, Olive Harvey College, and Northeastern Illinois' Center for Inner-City Studies, as well as elected officials and leaders from business, industry, and the community. Additional UPIs are currently being launched in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York City. Other locations—including Los Angeles, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Philadelphia—are also under consideration.

Three destructive national trends make local problem solving an imperative: the decimation of many federal urban programs, the stagnant national economy, and the uneven administration of justice that disproportionately burdens America's poor and minorities. UPI will respond to requests from local leaders for help in coping with a host of urban problems including high unemployment, poor housing, inadequate educational opportunity, family disintegration, crime, drug abuse, threats to health and safety, and racial and ethnic tensions.

The Urban Policy Institutes seek to:

- Bring together individuals and organization leaders who may have different views about how to achieve common goals;
- Document local problems and identify and define local issues;
- Frame priority issues in terms of fundamental community values;
- Examine alternative choices, strategies, and trade-offs;
- Identify potential allies (with common interests);
- Develop action agendas which could be implemented by local organizations and individual leaders.

Local Leaders Set the Agenda

Another unique feature of UPI is that local leaders will provide the primary impetus to make this concept work over the long haul. While the Joint Center will sponsor two or more public policy forums each year in each participating city, a permanent Joint Center presence is not envisioned at this time, nor is a new organization planned. Rather, it is hoped that as a result of this initiative, stubborn, crippling urban problems will begin to yield to workable solutions advanced by alliances of urban leaders around shared concerns.

UPI is not so much a new technology as it is a new perspective on public agenda building using familiar and effective approaches borrowed from historically successful experience in public participation. ■

Dr. Scruggs, the director of the program, is the former deputy mayor of Philadelphia and former commissioner of housing of New York State. She previously served as a professor of policy and planning at Howard University and at the University of Pennsylvania.

Democracy

(Continued from page 4)

Although the West has been slow to provide additional aid and debt relief to African countries committed to democratic governance, some non-African organizations have made critical contributions. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has provided funding for a wide variety of democratic initiatives, including general assistance to professional and business associations, the press, and citizens' groups. In the 1980s, TransAfrica, the black-American foreign affairs lobby, was instrumental in getting the U.S. Congress to impose economic sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa. Those sanctions helped pressure the South African government to open negotiations with the African National Congress aimed at forming a multiracial democracy there.

A number of organizations, including the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in Washington, D.C., are engaged in the support of fair elections abroad. Last year, the Atlanta-based Carter Center of Emory University combined forces with NDI to organize the four-month comprehensive election monitoring effort in Zambia that built public confidence and encouraged participation in the voting process.

However, David Peterson, program officer for Africa at the National Endowment for Democracy, cautions against giving too much credit to international efforts. "We at the Endowment would have to be very modest about the impact that we've had. The democratic movement would have gotten underway regardless of our help."

Democracy's Challenges

It is clear that newly democratized African nations will face many challenges in implementing pluralistic systems. Perhaps the single most important challenge to the success of democratic reforms is economic performance. Dr. Herbert Weiss, a professor of political science at Brooklyn College, believes that the economic structural adjustment policies imposed on African states by international aid organizations and Western governments will create additional difficulties for newly democratized nations. Structural adjustment policies have been forcing African governments to tighten their belts and lower expenditures, resulting in less money for government services such as health care, education, and transportation. "The Eastern European aid priority is likely to supersede American interest in Africa which, when coupled with structural adjustment programs, bodes ill for Africa's new democratic regimes," says Weiss. African governments must convince their financially strapped citizens of the long-term economic benefits of these structural adjustment policies before they are voted out of office.

A second challenge to the success of political pluralism in Africa is ethnic cleavage. Says Carrington, "The problem is to make politics something other than a zero-sum game, where winning doesn't mean everyone else is excluded." Several African specialists have suggested that a federalist system might best reconcile traditional tribal conflicts, as federalism decentralizes governmental authority and gives smaller groups a voice through local elections.

A third challenge that must be met if democratic governance is to succeed is establishing independent civic institutions free of government intervention. An active free press and a vigorous body of professional, business, advocacy, and community associations will help to vocalize areas of concern and to pressure the government to remain accountable to the electorate.

If African states can work towards consensus politics and self-determination, democratic values and traditions should, in time, prosper. There is still a strong need for the international community to remain involved in the transition by applying external pressure on African leaders. But just as it was up to the people of Africa to create an environment receptive to reform, it is up to African citizens to safeguard newly established democratic systems. ■

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Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
1301 Pa. Ave., N.W., Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 626-3500

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